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Char. E. Flanagan.

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STATE-BUILDING IN THE WEST.*

BY JUDGE CHARLES E. FLANDRAU.

The progress of our country to the westward since the union of the original thirteen states presents a great many very interesting subjects of inquiry and observation, and none more so than the effect of early associations and character upon the later growth and development of a people. We find in the first settlement of the American colonies the most radical differences in the characteristics of the people, both in social and religious methods of thought and action. Take Virginia and the colonies to the south, and we find the peculiarities of the aristocratic cavalier dominating the people up to the date of our civil war in 1861; while all along the New England coast, originally settled by the Roundheads, we note the stern and unbending qualities of the Puritan fathers giving color to law and society, in the highest degree antagonistic to their southern neighbors. So persistent, ingrained and unyielding was this contrariety of sentiment that, as we all know, it produced a final collision of arms, each side putting the wrong on the other, and no doubt in perfect good faith.

Now that it is all over and we have a united country, it may not be amiss to relate an anecdote illustrative of the southern view of the rights and wrongs of the situation; I never could resist a good story, hit where it may. You remember that the bishops and other representatives of the Episcopal Church assemble periodically in convention to settle their ecclesiastical affairs. When the war broke out, of course there was an interval during which the northern and southern members did not get together; but when peace was declared the first convention was held in some northern city, and the bishops were all very happy to see a united church once more. The Bishop

*Read at the monthly meeting of the Executive Council, April 12, 1897.

of Louisiana was there, and, coming from the very heart of the confederacy, he was quite a lion. A northern gentleman, while conversing with him, naturally drifted into the war, and said: "Bishop, don't you think this dreadful war might have been avoided had the government adopted such a course?", naming some policy; "No, sir," said the Bishop. "Well now, Bishop, don't you think it might have been prevented had such a course been taken?", pointing out some other policy; "No, sir," said the Bishop, more emphatically than before. "Don't you think there was anything which could have spared us such a fratricidal conflict?" "Yes, sir," said the Bishop. "Do give me your views as to what could have averted such a calamity." "I frankly believe," said the Bishop, "that if Plymouth Rock had landed on the Pilgrims, instead of the Pilgrims landing on Plymouth Rock, there never would have been any trouble at all.

Environment exerts a most potent influence upon a people in the beginning of their career. Both New England and the South began as agriculturists, but the more generous and bountiful soil of the south afforded its people an easier opportunity of gaining a livelihood than the barren soil and inhospitable climate of the New England colonies. It was not long before they both adopted the aid of slaves in the conduct of their pursuits, but it soon became manifest that their assistance was not profitable in the north, while it could be utilized to great advantage in the south; so that it gradually became extinct in one section, while it flourished and increased in the other. The greater facilities for enrichment in the south by agriculture tended to the enlargement of estates and a prodigality of expenditure and luxurious living, while the farmers of the north found themselves forced to the exercise of great economy, frugality, and extraordinary industry, to acquire the necessities of life; and this condition of things drove them to other means of subsistence than the cultivation of the soil. It was the niggardly return that nature made to their labors on the farm that stimulated their ingenuity and turned their efforts into the channels of invention and the creation of mechanical devices with which to supplement the natural sources of subsistence. When I hear the world extolling the New England virtues of thrift, economy, morality, and the love of an orderly and sober existence, while I acknowledge it all and join in the

general voice of praise, I cannot but feel that environment had much to do with it, and that had the lot of the same people been cast where the surroundings had been less rigorous, the world would have been deprived of their beneficent example. I regard it as the most fortunate thing for the welfare of our country that its settlement should have commenced on the Atlantic coast; for had it begun in the bountiful lands of the west, and our countrymen been deprived of the restraining influences of the east, there is no telling what kind of a people we would have been. Take California as an example of a country that gave everybody a chance to grow rich at a jump; and, judging by its present standard of social morality, we can well conceive what it would have been, had it not been largely populated from New England. I think it was Mark Twain who said that if you plant a New England deacon in Texas, you will find him in about a year with a game chicken under his arm, riding a mule on Sunday to a cock fight. Environment is a very strong force in human affairs.

THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY.

We all remember that Virginia, in 1784, ceded to the United States a vast tract of country lying north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi river. She acquired this territory under a royal grant to the Virginia Company, made in 1619. It was known after its cession to the United States as the Northwest Territory. It is a very interesting and somewhat curious feature of this cession, that, although Virginia did not make it a positive condition of the grant that the land should be forever dedicated to freedom, yet she was one of the strongest advocates of the clause in the Ordinance of 1787, passed by Congress for its government, which provided, "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted." And for twenty years after the grant, Virginia statesmen took the lead in resisting all attempts to introduce slavery into the territory. Virginia was then a slave state, and its leading products were mainly dependent upon slave labor for their success. There was not a time, from the date of this magnificent gift to the Union down to the breaking out of the Civil War in 1861, when Virginia would

not have fought the world in defense of her peculiar institution; and yet we find her great, far-seeing and patriotic statesmen fully imbued with the knowledge that, having inherited the evil and finding it too intimately interwoven with the social and industrial life of the people to be shaken off, they were determined to prevent its infliction upon future generations. For this wise provision and conscientious action, the West is under boundless obligations to the fathers of Virginia.

THE ERA OF THE FUR TRADE.

Before entering upon a consideration of the settlement of the Northwest concession, or even the Louisiana Purchase, which I will mention hereafter, I must speak of the commerce with the Indians that was carried on in these regions long before our Revolutionary War, by the great fur companies, by means of their *coureurs des bois* and *voyageurs*. The headquarters of the French traders was at Montreal, and they pushed their adventurous commerce westward through the lake region and Canada. The Roman Catholic missionaries kept abreast, and sometimes in advance, of them. They found their first formidable rivals in the Hudson Bay Company, chartered by Charles the Second in 1670. This company occupied all the country about Hudson bay and west, often extending far to the south. In 1762 the French lost possession of Canada, which left the Indian trade almost exclusively in the hands of the British; but, except that carried on by the Hudson Bay Company, it rapidly declined in extent and importance. The Indians did not like the British as they had liked the French, and it was not until the old *voyageurs* and *coureurs des bois* took service generally with the British that the trade revived, and in 1766 began to resume its old channels. But rivalries sprang up among the traders and produced ruinous collisions and scenes of disorder, which much imperiled the success of the trade.

To remedy this, in 1783 the principal merchants of Montreal formed a partnership; and in 1787 they amalgamated with the rival company, and thus formed the celebrated Northwest Company. This company flourished for a long time and penetrated as far north and west as lakes Winnipeg and Athabasca and Great Slave lake. The operations of the Northwest Company were managed on a magnificent scale, and its chief

men took on the airs and importance of feudal lords. They were principally Scotchmen: the McTavishes, the McGillivrays, the McKenzies, the Frobishers, and many others whose names still exist in the Canadian provinces.

This company was followed by the Mackinaw Company in 1794. While the Northwesters occupied the more northern regions, the Mackinaws pushed down by Green bay, Fox river, and the Wisconsin, towards the Mississippi. The United States, seeing this foreign invasion of its territory, in 1796 sent out agents to establish rival posts to prevent this trade from being diverted from its own citizens; and from this time the Americans took quite an active part in the fur trade.

But the most important movement on our part was when Mr. John Jacob Astor, a native of Germany but an American citizen, embarked in the business in 1807. After a year or two of successful operations, he incorporated the American Fur Company in 1809. He afterwards, and in 1811, in conjunction with members of the Northwest Company, purchased the Mackinaw Company and merged that and the American Fur Company into a new one called the Southwest Company. Then came the war of 1812 with Great Britain, which put an end to the British trading for furs in American territory.

In 1792 the Russians went into Alaska and carried on a very extensive fur trade, and held it until our purchase of it in 1867.

Mr. Astor pushed his trade by land across the continent, and by sea along the Pacific coast, founding the town of Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia, which was captured by the British in the war of 1812.

This occupation of the country for the purposes of trading with the Indians left very little impression upon its future population, but it formed a most interesting epoch in its history, and has been very appropriately called by one of Minnesota's first historians, "the heroic age of American commerce."

I have seen a good deal of the old *voyageurs*. Many of them and their descendants were in the Northwest when I first settled in it. They were mostly Scotchmen, Canadian Frenchmen, and half-breeds. It was usual to fit out a crew with boats and a cargo in the spring, and to send them off on expeditions to exchange their goods for furs, not expecting to see them or hear from them again for a whole year. When after this long

absence they returned with their rich load of fine furs, they were absolutely sure to account for every dollar that had been entrusted to them. There was a devotion to duty and a fidelity to their employers displayed by these men that amounted to heroism and chivalry. To risk their lives in the defense or protection of their employers' property, and frequently to die in such cause, was deemed by these loyal men as simply a part of their daily duty. Defalcations or embezzlements were utterly unknown among them. A braver, hardier, truer race of men was never known in any land.

One of the most interesting accounts of this romantic and adventurous period is found in Washington Irving's delightful story of "Astoria." He also notices what has often been forced upon my observation, that the environments of men produce very striking differences even in their physical conformation. I have noticed that the Sioux Indians, who are meat eaters and formerly lived, as you may say, at the tail of the buffalo, whose means of locomotion is the horse, are a tall, thin, muscular race; while the Chippewas, living in the same climate, only a short distance away, but who occupy a water country, traveling in canoes, and living principally on fish, are a soft, fat people. There is an old adage that says: "We are what we eat."

Irving says of the fish-eating tribes on the Pacific coast:

The effect of different modes of life upon the human frame and human character is strikingly instanced in the contrast between the hunting Indians of the prairies and the piscatory Indians of the sea coast. The former, continually on horseback scouring the plains, gaining their food by hardy exercise, and subsisting chiefly on flesh, are generally tall, sinewy, meagre, but well formed, and of bold and fierce deportment; the latter, lounging about the river banks, or squatting and curved up in their canoes, are generally low in stature, ill shaped, with crooked legs, thick ankles, and broad flat feet. They are inferior also in muscular power and activity, and in game qualities and appearance, to their hard-riding brethren of the prairies.

To return now to the Northwest Territory: out of this grant have been created the five great states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, besides a considerable part of Minnesota. Nowhere in the progress of our Union has the original material of which states have been made been more influential in controlling their future than in the states carved out of this territory. We are familiar with the fact that in all

the southern states there was a large element of whites who were landless and living by renting, or who squatted on the land of others. These people were generally known as "poor white trash." They despised the slaves, and the negroes entertained for them the most profound contempt. Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee, lying south of the Ohio, abounded with them. Nothing was more natural than that they should seek the cheap government lands north of the Ohio. They pouree across the river and settled all the southern portions of what afterward became Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. I suppose there never was a more ignorant, lazy, and unambitious people found in any country. They soon, however, began to better their condition in a material point of view; but they resisted all intellectual and social advancement for many years, and until it was forced upon them by that great civilizer, the locomotive. To this day their architecture and general surroundings bear witness to the low standard of their origin. We have only to recall the epithet that was so long applied to southern Illinois, "Egypt," to be fully convinced that you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, as the old proverb goes.

While this immigration was flowing into the south end of the great Northwest Territory, another channel was opened into the northern end to a far different class of people. The chain of great lakes covered the entire northern boundary, and afforded a highway for the ingress of the people of New England, New York, and Pennsylvania, who soon made a lodgment all along the northern line and peopled it with great rapidity. It also caught the better class of immigrants from the north of Europe, as it is well known that people migrate along the climatic lines that they have been accustomed to. The enterprise and intelligence of these immigrants soon resulted in the building of great cities, the establishment of important commercial interests, and a general prosperity which has continued with marvelous expansion until the present day, proving my assertion that initial influences are potent in shaping after results.

Now that all the objectionable features of our early population in these regions have yielded to the grand march of civilization, we may refer to them as facts with which to prove a theory, without being considered invidious or unkind.

THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE.

Another vast source of raw material for building states was found in the Louisiana Purchase, which we made from France in 1803. The French had a settlement at New Orleans near the mouth of the Mississippi, and, as with all rights arising from such coastwise settlements, they claimed everything beyond; and it turned out, in the end, fortunate for us that they did. The country north and northwest of the mouth of the Mississippi was at that time a *terra incognita*. It had never been explored, and, like all such unknown quantities, was not valued very highly. Napoleon Bonaparte, then First Consul of the Republic of France, being very hard up and wanting money to carry on his wars, was induced to sell us Louisiana for 60,000,000 francs, or about \$12,000,000; and we assumed other obligations amounting to about 20,000,000 francs. The sale was perfected on the 30th day of April, 1803, by treaty made at Paris. We at once took possession, and out of this almost boundless expanse of territory we have successively erected the states of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, a large part of Minnesota, part of Kansas, all of Nebraska, both the Dakotas, Montana, parts of Wyoming and Colorado, and have laid claim to Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. What composes Oregon, Washington and Idaho, was not really in the Louisiana Purchase, but was acquired by right of settlement, as will appear hereafter.

In the settlement of these states nothing out of the customary order occurred until the act was passed by Congress on March 6th, 1820, to authorize Missouri to form a state government. At this time public sentiment had been worked up in the North to the point of checking the extension of slavery, and a clause was put into this act forever prohibiting slavery in any other part of the Louisiana Purchase lying north of the latitude of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes. This was near the south boundary line of Missouri, and the determination of Congress was to prevent slavery from gaining a footing north of that line. Missouri having been largely settled from Kentucky and other southern states, slavery was a fixed institution there, and Congress made no attempt to interfere with it.

KANSAS AND NEBRASKA.

Immigration continued to flow into these new regions without creating any unusual sensation, until the year 1854, when the country west of the Missouri river had gained sufficient population to justify its having a territorial government, and an act was introduced into Congress to create the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska. At this time a very distinguished citizen of Illinois, Mr. Stephen A. Douglas, was a senator of the United States and was possessed with a strong desire to become president. To conciliate the South, he inserted into the act a clause repealing the prohibition of the extension of slavery which was contained in the Missouri act, and which had been in force for thirty-four years, and, in the language of that day, injected a little stump speech into the act in explanation of the repeal, which measure became of so much importance in the settlement of the West, in the politics of the whole country, and in the fortunes of Mr. Douglas, that I feel justified in repeating it. After the clause of repeal of that part of the Missouri act, the purpose of the repeal was declared as follows:

It being the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any territory or state, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof free to form and regulate their domestic relations in their own way, subject only to the constitution of the United States.

This doctrine was known as "Squatter Sovereignty;" and if any of you are old enough to remember the excitement it created throughout the country, you must regard the recent campaign about the free coinage of silver at 16 to 1 as mere child's play in comparison. A regular old-fashioned abolitionist was as a tornado to a zephyr when contrasted with any form of modern politician; and, with "Bleeding Kansas" for his war-cry, he was irresistible.

This repeal of what was known as the "Missouri Compromise" deeply stirred the antislavery people of the country, and they determined that Kansas and Nebraska should never be admitted into the Union as slave states. They immediately commenced a forced and unnatural emigration, designed to outnumber that from the slave states. Beecher declared that rifles were far more efficacious than bibles in the settlement of

Kansas, and the most intense excitement prevailed. The contending factions were known as the Abolitionists and the Border Ruffians, the latter largely from Missouri. Numerous conflicts occurred with fatal results. Several constitutions were framed, and Kansas was finally admitted into the Union on January 29th, 1861, as a free state. During this conflict, cranks of all kinds and descriptions flocked to Kansas in such numbers as to distinctly impress upon its inhabitants their singular eccentricities, which have clung to them ever since. If you want to raise a crop of isms, no matter how absurd or unheard of, plant your seed in Kansas and your yield is sure. Generations will have to succeed each other before the kinks can be straightened out of Kansas. I simply mention this circumstance in support of my theory of the effect of early impressions. There is an old saying that it takes three generations to make a gentleman from a bad start; and our country will have occasion for rejoicing if it eradicates within that time some of the tares that took root in Kansas soil when in its formative condition. Kansas adopted for its coat of arms the lofty legend, "*Ad astra per aspera*," and it has been star-gazing and rainbow-chasing ever since. Mr. Douglas never attained his ambition.

THE PONY EXPRESS.

California came into the Union in 1850 as one of the fruits of the war with Mexico. As we all know, her settlement was immensely accelerated by the discovery of gold, and she became of great importance in many ways long before there was any means of communication between her and the other states, except by slowly crossing a continent by land or going around one by sea. The time occupied in the long and tedious methods of transportation was exceedingly distasteful to the people at both ends of the route; and, like true Americans, they determined to remedy the evil, cost what it would. Out of this decision sprang one of the most daring and adventurous undertakings ever conceived or executed by any people in any country. It was a scheme to carry some of the mails and light and valuable express matter from the Missouri river to San Francisco on the Pacific ocean, a distance of two thousand miles, by means of ponies ridden by young men for distances of sev-

enty-five to one hundred miles, with great rapidity, making changes every forty miles.

The route lay through an uninhabited country, over vast plains and mountain ranges infested by the most warlike and hostile savages on the North American continent. Who could be expected to undertake such service? The idea was conceived by Senator Gwin, of California, Alexander Majors, and Daniel E. Phelps, but was very generally laughed at by the most experienced plainsmen and mountaineers, and was pronounced by them to be foolhardy and impossible. They predicted that the riders would all be killed and scalped before the first trip could be made; but Western enterprise was not frightened by the croakers, and the plan was adopted. Six hundred Texas bronchos were purchased, stations built, and seventy-five riders engaged. A hundred and twenty-five to a hundred and fifty dollars per month were the average wages paid.

The first pony rider started on his trip from St. Joseph, in Missouri, on the 3rd day of April, 1860, and by riding night and day, with only two minutes for pony changes and refreshments or for changes to successive riders, Sacramento, at a distance of two thousand miles, was reached in ten days. The rate charged was \$5 per ounce for the full distance, each rider carrying about ten pounds. On the same day and at the same hour that the pony started from St. Joseph, another started from Sacramento; and this continued two years without other interruption than the occasional killing of a rider by the Indians. In June, 1862, the first transcontinental telegraph went into operation, and the Pony Express yielded to its only conqueror, electricity.

The venture was a profitable one to its projectors, and satisfied the hungering of the people for news at the points so distant from each other, and immensely facilitated the transaction of business.

The first pony carried from the President of the United States a congratulatory message to the Governor of California. Colonel Cody, now so well known as "Buffalo Bill," then a stripling, and Mr. Robert Haslam, long and now a resident of Chicago, known as "Pony Bob," were two of the most daring and trusted riders engaged in the enterprise. Both of these

gentlemen are numbered among my esteemed friends. The best time made was when the last message of President Buchanan reached Sacramento in eight and one-half days from Washington,—an immense gain over the first overland expedition sent out by Mr. Astor, which was eleven months in crossing the continent. A talk about the settlement of the west without a mention of the Pony Express would be very incomplete.

In 1864 I resided at Carson City, on the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada mountains, on the route of the Overland Stages, and although the Pony Express had been taken off for two years, the idea was kept up, but in a different way. The mail was carried by the stages, but the stage that was expected to get the mail to San Francisco on steamer day, which was the day the steamer was to leave for the Isthmus, was always followed by a pony, who kept about two hours behind, to pick up the letters which had not been in readiness for the stage. The pony always arrived in time for the sailing of the steamer.

The Wells-Fargo Company had at a very early day established express lines all over the Pacific coast, and it became a habit of the miners to have all their letters addressed to them at the express office. The habit of calling at the express office instead of the post-office for letters became so general that the company always kept hung on the wall an alphabetical list of names of all persons for whom there were letters. This custom grew into one which was very convenient for the miners, and very profitable for the company. It would buy stamped envelopes at the post-office for \$3 a hundred in greenbacks, and stamp on them a notice that the company would deliver them at any point on the coast reached by its lines, and sell them for \$10 a hundred in gold, and would deliver any letter contained in one exactly as if it was an express package. As gold was worth three to one in greenbacks for many years all over the coast, the scheme was a very profitable one to the company; but the miners all preferred it, and nearly all the mail was carried in that way.

There was one rather curious feature about Nevada during my residence in the territory, which operated to the advantage of the Wells-Fargo Company. It cost so much to get a safe over the mountains that there was scarcely one in the country

except those belonging to this express company, and the condition of society was so disorderly that no one dared to keep any money on his premises; so all the receipts of the day found their way to these strong boxes for safe keeping, and Wells, Fargo & Co. became the bankers for the whole community, held all the deposits, sold all the exchange, and handled all the money of the country.

In the entire settlement of our country from the Atlantic to the Pacific, not excepting California, there never was a more desperately bad aggregation of people than were attracted to Nevada on the discovery of the Washoe silver mines. The find was immense, and as the distance across the Sierras, which divided Nevada from California, was only about a hundred and fifty miles, the entire floating, disreputable population of California poured over the mountains and filled Nevada with desperadoes of every type. In Carson and Virginia City we had murders daily, interspersed with shooting encounters, stage robberies, and every kind and character of criminality. As we expressed it in those days, we had a man for breakfast every morning.

But there was a relish of salvation even in that community. There were some churches, among which was a very weak attempt at an Episcopal church. I had the honor, with four Englishmen, to be a vestryman of that ecclesiastical body. It held its services in the senate chamber of the capitol building, which room was situated over the biggest saloon and gambling house in the territory. The services were accompanied by a rattling of roulette tables, a clicking of billiard balls, and a fusillade of popping champagne corks; and the proprietor of the establishment, under coercion from his wife, usually attended, and put into the plate a five or ten dollar gold piece. The sessions of the vestry were always held in the saloon, and on one occasion, when the question of raising the salary of the rector was before the board, we all felt so rich from the influence of our environments, that we reached the desired result by simply chipping in the amount necessary ourselves. Whether this generosity of the vestrymen was ever reimbursed by providential luck at the faro bank, I never inquired, but as a general thing bread cast upon the waters comes back through some channel.

HOW WE GOT OREGON, WASHINGTON AND IDAHO.

It is not generally known that the United States is very largely indebted to Marcus Whitman, an American missionary among the Indians of the Columbia river, for the title to and possession of the present states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.

It became known in the eastern states in 1835, that missionary work could be profitably bestowed upon the Indians inhabiting the valley of the Columbia on the Pacific coast, and this work was accepted by Marcus Whitman, a young doctor, living in western New York; and in the summer of 1836, Dr. Whitman and his wife, Henry Spaulding and his wife, and Henry W. Gray, made their way across the continent to the Oregon country. In the course of their very arduous journey they reached the summit of the Rocky mountains on the Fourth of July, 1836, and then for the first time they beheld the promised land beyond the western divide, toward which they were laboriously wending their way. They raised the American flag, knelt down before it, and solemnly took possession of the whole Pacific coast in the name of God and the United States of America.

At this time the whole country west of the Rocky mountains was utterly unknown to our people, except such information as we had obtained from the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804 and that of Capt. Bonneville in 1832, and such as we got through the Hudson Bay Company and the English newspapers, which was intentionally deceptive, as it was to their interest to represent it as an uninhabitable wilderness, fit only for hunters and trappers. It was not until 1843, seven years after Whitman's journey, that John C. Fremont, with an escort of United States troops, crossed this great continental barrier, and descended the western slope through the South Pass; and he gained the name of the "Pathfinder" by these explorations.

The tableau presented by this little band of Christian wanderers, alone in the center of a vast continent, thousands of miles from any man, save savages ready to destroy them, clustered around the flag of their country on its natal day, taking possession of an empire by the right of discovery and inhabitancy, is not only intensely romantic but partakes of the heroic

and the sublime. It was worthy of being the initial point in the vast emigration which followed, and formed the subject of the grand fresco by Leutze, which adorns a panel in our national capitol, bearing the legend, "Westward the course of empire takes its way."

Whitman persisted against the remonstrances of his own party, and the almost peremptory orders of the traders of the Hudson Bay Company, who occupied the country, in taking through with him his canvas-covered wagon. It had broken down many times, but he resurrected it on two wheels, and succeeded in getting it through the mountains, although he had to drag it by hand a great part of the way. It seemed as if he had a presentiment that the passage of the mountains by a wagon would prove a great factor in the future of the Pacific country, and it turned out that he was a true prophet in so thinking.

At this time the boundary line between our country and the British possessions on the north had not been established, and there was a sort of joint occupation in theory, but an actual possession by the British traders of the Hudson Bay Company, of the country which now comprises Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.

The little missionary party traversed the continent in safety, and on reaching the valley of the Columbia at Waiilatpu, four miles west of the present city of Walla Walla, Mr. Whitman established his home among the Cayuse Indians, while Spaulding and his wife proceeded up the Snake river to Lapwai, and settled among the Nez Percé Indians.

In the fall of 1842, Dr. Whitman was called to visit a patient at the Hudson Bay trading post at Fort Walla Walla, and while at dinner with the traders a guide announced the arrival of a party of British settlers from the Saskatchewan country, to the north, who were entering Oregon to seize it for Great Britain. On hearing this news, a young priest instantly sprang to his feet, and offered the toast, "Here's to Oregon; she is ours now, and the United States may whistle for her." Dr. Whitman heard this statement with much alarm, both on account of the threatened loss of this beautiful country to our government, and of the destruction of his mission. He immediately announced to his people that he would start at once for Washington, to inform the government of the impending

danger. All entreaties to prevent his departure proved unavailing, and the next morning he mounted his horse and departed just as winter was setting in. He took with him a young white man named Lovejoy, and an Indian. Captain Grant, an English officer in command of Fort Hall, in what is now southern Idaho, attempted to stop him, but he pushed on. On the 3rd of January, 1843, after suffering the most terrible hardships, they reached Bent's Fort on the Arkansas river; Whitman's hands and feet were frozen, but he was undaunted in spirit. Here he left Lovejoy and the Indian, who were exhausted, and pushed on to Washington. He met many Americans who were then pouring into the Mississippi valley, and told them of the fertility and beauty of the Oregon country. Lovejoy scattered handbills setting forth the same facts, and inviting emigration to that region.

On the 3rd of March, 1843, Whitman reached Washington, having been on the road just five months, and having travelled four thousand miles, three thousand of which he made on horseback. He called on Daniel Webster, then Secretary of State, and found him engaged in negotiations with Great Britain to exchange our claim to the Oregon territory for a cod fishery, and could not interest him in his purpose. He then saw John Tyler, the President, who listened to him, but insisted that Oregon could not be saved to the United States, because it was impossible to settle it from the east, as wagons could not cross the mountains. At this point appeared the wisdom displayed by Whitman in insisting on taking his wagon over the mountains. He informed the President that he had removed that objection seven years ago and had taken a wagon over the Columbia, and that such other difficulties as existed could easily be overcome. The President answered, "If you can show the accessibility of Oregon, and that the mountains can be crossed by wagons, I will see that the land is not given to Great Britain." Whitman had gained his point. In a week he was on his way west, and that summer he was at the head of the first wagon train that ever crossed the Rocky mountains. It consisted of two hundred wagons, manned by one thousand determined, adventurous and patriotic American citizens, drawn by nearly three thousand horses and oxen. The train reached the Walla Walla valley safely in September, 1843, and saved

what is now Oregon, Washington, and Idaho to the United States of America, as the treaty of July 17th, 1846, with Great Britain, fixed the northern boundary line on the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude.

This adjustment of the boundary was almost entirely based upon the fact that the American settlements extended well up to that line, which settlements were the result of the indomitable pluck and patriotism of Marcus Whitman. If you consult the maps published by the American Geographical Society you will find that Oregon, Washington, and Idaho are all represented as lying west of the western boundary of the Louisiana Purchase, their acquisition by the United States being based upon "prior settlement." The fact is that none of the territory embraced within either of these three states ever belonged to France, or fell within the Louisiana Purchase. France never claimed any territory on the Pacific coast. It is true that, while the boundary line was under discussion between us and Great Britain, we based part of our claim to Oregon on the Louisiana Purchase, but the true grounds of our title were:

1. The discovery of the Columbia river by Captain Gray, of the American ship *Columbia*, in 1792, who named the river after his ship; which discovery, according to the then prevailing law, gave the nation of the discoverer all the territory embraced within the basin of the river to its source, and to the source of all its tributaries;
2. The discoveries made by Lewis and Clark in 1804 and 1806;
3. Those of Astor in 1811;
4. The treaty between the United States and Spain of February 22nd, 1819, known as the treaty of "Amity, Settlement, and Limits," under which the claim was made, whether right or wrong, that Spain surrendered to us all her remaining territorial rights in North America; and
5. The right of prior settlement induced by Marcus Whitman as before related.

Some maps published in later years place Oregon, Washington, and Idaho within the Louisiana Purchase, but there is no foundation for the position.

The Hudson Bay Company bitterly resented this influx of Americans into the country which they had dedicated to sav-

agery, and they knew that Whitman had caused it. They stirred the Indians up to hate Whitman, and in the end caused him to be murdered, with his wife and twelve of his missionary household; the rest of the mission people were carried into captivity.

The great work of this brave man has been remembred by his many ardent friends by the erection of a memorial college at Walla Walla, called "Whitman College."

TERRITORIES.

It has always been the case that territories seem to offer more attractions to the emigrating class than states. It is probably owing to the fact of their presenting a better opportunity for the selection of lands, and that society, politically and otherwise, is in a formative state. These conditions present superior advantages to the agriculturist and the politician, the latter class always being a large factor in the first settlement of our territories. You remember that Greeley said, "Go west, young man, go west," and that after the young man had been west a short time he discovered so many opportunities lying around loose that he wrote back to his father: "Come out, dad, mighty mean men get office out west," and that the father accepted the invitation.

It was under some such inspiration that I came to the new territory of Minnesota about forty-three years ago; and after getting here, and having the river freeze up behind me so that I couldn't get out, I began to wonder what I came for. It was not long, however, before I struck one of the many opportunities that I have referred to. The Indian title to all the lands west of the Mississippi river had just been extinguished. Some capitalists wanted to start a second Chicago, if they could only find a place for it; so they sent me into the Indian country to look it up. After exploring the Minnesota river and all its tributaries, and finding one of the most beautiful valleys on the earth, I decided to report favorably for the new Chicago.

Among my discoveries I found a young Scotchman, who was all alone and was overjoyed to discover me. He begged me to remain in the country, but I said: "I am a lawyer; how can I live where there are no people?" To this apparent dilemma he had an instant and conclusive answer: "Why, that is the

easiest part of it," said he, "we can hunt a living, and I have a shack." The idea was catching, and as I had already had the experience of three years at sea before the mast, I jumped at it; and when we got to house-keeping I found myself located at a point farther west than any lawyer in the United States east of the Rocky mountains, unless he was in Texas. We literally hunted a living. The first winter, with the aid of a dead pony for a bait, we shot forty-two wolves out of the back window of our shack, and sold the pelts for seventy-five cents apiece. I founded the city of St. Peter, which is now a place of four or five thousand inhabitants. My Scotch friend and one other man, besides myself, were the first inhabitants; and as both of these parties were killed by the Indians in the outbreak of 1862, the Scotchman as a trader among them, and the other man as my first lieutenant in a lively fight we had with them, I found myself in the position of the man they exhibit on the Fourth of July, "the oldest inhabitant." I lived at this point for eleven years, and saw nearly a million people settle west of the Mississippi in the country that belonged to the Indians only a few months before my arrival.

The only reason I have for making these personal allusions is because my early settlement at the point I have mentioned brought me into intimate touch with the Indians, who have been a very important feature of state-building in the West. I shall have something to say of them hereafter.

I have said a good deal about the influence exerted upon the West by the character of the people who first settled it; but I am quite sure that the power the West wields over those who are cast upon its mighty bosom is equally as potent in shaping their destinies.

The great West is an educator. If a young man migrates to a country so new that society is unformed, over which no regular government has yet extended, and where the whole civil organization is yet to be put into operation, he finds himself confronted with all these great problems and is called upon to take an active part in their solution. His individuality, if he has any, must display itself. He is compelled to think and act upon questions which would not have engaged his attention except in a secondary way in an older country, until he had arrived at a much more advanced and mature period of life. He takes his position in society according to his merits, and

not upon the false basis of inheritance or fortune as in old communities. He cannot move on carelessly in some familiar rut in which his father moved before him, because there are no such ruts marked out for his guidance; he is free to think and act for himself, relieved from all conventionalities. He collides daily with astute and independent thinkers, and fundamental and philosophical principles force themselves upon his consideration, and he must grapple with them. His mind expands; he becomes an original thinker himself, and finds a virgin field in which to test the experimental creations of his genius. His new existence is a revelation to him; a mind which might have dragged out a sluggish and routine existence in a city or in an old settled country, when brought face to face with nature in her grandest manifestations of boundless prairies, towering mountain ranges and majestic streams, experiences a new birth, an electric inspiration, utterly unknown to the denizens of perfected communities. The mind of a man can be fenced in as well as the country he inhabits, and it will take its color and habits from its surroundings. When we compare the best productions of human skill with the creations of God, we admit the truth of what the poet says:

"Nature hath nothing made so base, but can
Read some instruction to the wisest man."

Who has ever roamed over one of our limitless prairies, through the depths of a majestic forest, or down the wild cañons of some mountain pass, and did not feel his whole nature exalted into harmony with the grandeur which encompassed him? Who can ever forget the sensation of awe, mingled with emancipation, that he experienced on first crossing the mighty Mississippi and knowing that he was in the West? Stolid indeed must be the spirit, and irresponsive the heart, that is privileged to familiar intercourse with the sublime in nature and does not become refined and enlarged.

THE INDIANS.

It was not long after I located at the point I have mentioned in Minnesota, before I was placed in charge of the great and warlike tribe of Sioux Indians by the United States government. I had lived in their midst for several years and knew a good deal about them, and had seen something of the Winne-

bagoes and Chippewas, which tribes were located in other parts of Minnesota, and I subsequently became intimate with the Piutes in Nevada.

As the Indians have largely entered into the question of the westward movement of white settlement, I desire to say something about them. They are a superb race of men. I have studied their characteristics from all points of view, and I venture to say that a better race of aboriginal men never inhabited the earth, than the Indians of the Northwest in America. They are splendid specimens of the animal man. Tall, well-formed, athletic, they excel in all manly traits, such as riding, hunting, and fighting. Like all savages, they will deceive when they expect to be deceived; and in all their relations with the whites they expect to be overreached, and are generally not disappointed.

When we judge of them with regard to their rebellions and depredations, we should be careful to make due allowances for their peculiar relationship to the whites, and nothing will illustrate this point better than the situation of the tribe of Sioux which inhabited Minnesota west of the Mississippi. Their country was an Indian paradise. It held great forests of sugar trees; it abounded in beautiful lakes filled with fish; rice swamps were numerous; buffalo, elk, deer, beaver, and all the animals useful to the primitive man, were plentiful; nothing was wanting to make the country one especially adapted to the Indian. He was induced to sell it; the fact is, he was compelled to sell it. He knew as well as anyone that he had to retire before the advance of a superior race, and that his only hope was to make the best bargain he could. Such transactions are called treaties; but they are treaties only in name. The superior power demands the land and offers the compensation; the inferior power knows perfectly well that, if it does not accept the terms, it will ultimately be forced out of its domains, and it accepts. This comprises the elements of all Indian treaties.

They were given lands that they did not want, which were nearly destitute of game. It is true that they had the freedom of the boundless buffalo range to the northwest, but that was only temporary, as time has shown. Their annuities were

often delayed, which caused much suffering. It was natural, under such conditions, that they should become discontented. I, of course, do not justify their bloody rebellions; but, had I been an Indian, I should have felt very rebellious. They have disappeared with the buffalo they loved so well and depended on so long, and it makes me very sad to think that our great Christian civilization could not have devised some means of assimilating them, and of preventing their utter destruction. They were a gallant race, generous, hospitable, true according to their teachings, and the best warriors this continent ever produced.

It is the one result of a superior race colliding with an inferior one. The lands are wanted and will be had; a fighting people never yield to anything but force; a haughty savage race can never be civilized; labor to them is degradation; they can die fighting, but they will not work. You might as well attempt to put a hoe in the hands of a deposed monarch of France as to make a husbandman of a Sioux warrior.

The remnant of this once splendid race is corralled on various reservations. They are prisoners of war, and the government finds it cheaper to feed them than to fight them. It could not very well be otherwise; but I, who have met the Indian on his native plains, in all the majesty of his royal freedom, must be pardoned if I say that I have great sympathy for poor "Lo."

My intercourse with the Sioux was very interesting. I had seven thousand five hundred of them under my charge, and was brought into frequent contact with many of the wildest tribes of the upper Missouri, Tetons, Yanktons, Cutheads, and others. I have had these tribes make incursions into my territory, ten thousand strong, demanding a share in the distribution of the annuities; I paid out wagon-loads of coin, and steamboat-loads of every variety of goods, from a frying pan to an ox team. Of course, I could not admit the strangers to a share, and much negotiation and many powwows resulted. I always appeared in council, supported by a body-guard of about fifty chosen Indians, fully armed, splendidly mounted on fine American horses, and gayly decked out in feathers and finery. The celebrated Little Crow, who afterwards led the massacres and bat-

ties of 1862, was my captain and ambassador; and with my interpreters and staff, we made a gallant display. General Sully once told me that no officer of the government, civil or military, should ever appear among the savages in less than a major general's uniform. I did not literally follow his advice, but my toggery was as imposing as brilliant colors and glittering arms could make it; and the present young "war lord" of Germany never felt half so grand as I did, when my cavalcade galloped over the plains.

The first serious trouble we had with the Indians was in 1857, when a detached band under Ink-pa-du-ta, or the Scarlet Point, murdered about forty-two people in a settlement in the northwest corner of Iowa and the southwest corner of Minnesota, carrying into captivity four white women. It naturally devolved upon me to attempt their rescue. The only means was by negotiation and purchase, as an hostile approach would have been the death knell of the prisoners. Through my Indians, I succeeded in rescuing two of the women, the other two having been killed before I could reach them. It may be curious for you to know what I paid for them.

I paid two Indians \$500 each for bringing in the first woman, and sent them and others with an outfit to purchase the others. It consisted of the following articles: a wagon and double harness; four horses; twelve three-point blankets, four blue, eight white; 22 yards of blue squaw cloth; 37 yards of calico; one dozen shirts; ribbon; one sack of shot; 50 pounds of powder; 20 pounds of tobacco; corn; flour; coffee; and sugar. They succeeded in getting another of the captive women and safely delivered her to me.

When I had to pay the \$1,000 for the first woman, I only had \$500 in money and could not get any more in the country; so I resorted to a rather novel method of raising it, one, however, that has become quite general since. I issued a bond, and as it was the first bond ever issued in the vast region now composing seven or eight states, and was rather unique in form, I will give it to you:

I, Stephen R. Riggs, missionary among the Sioux Indians, and I, Charles E. Flandrau, United States Agent for the Sioux, being satisfied that Mak-pi-ka-ho-ton and Si-ha-ho-ta, two Sioux Indians, have per-

formed a valuable service to the Territory of Minnesota and humanity by rescuing from captivity Mrs. Margaret Ann Marble and delivering her to the Sioux Agent; and being further satisfied that the rescue of the two remaining white women who are now in captivity among Ink-pa-du-ta's band of Indians depends much upon the liberality shown towards said Indians who have rescued Mrs. Marble; and having full confidence in the humanity and liberality of the Territory of Minnesota, through its government and citizens, have this day paid to said two above named Indians the sum of five hundred dollars in money, and do hereby pledge to said two Indians that the further sum of five hundred dollars in money will be paid to them by the Territory of Minnesota or its citizens within three months from the date hereof.

Dated May 22nd, 1857, at Pa-ju-ta-zi-zi, M. T.,

STEPHEN R. RIGGS,

Missionary A. B. C. F. M.

CHAS. E. FLANDRAU,

U. S. Indian Agent for the Sioux.

One of the principal features in which this bond differed from most of those issued subsequently in the Northwest is, that it was paid strictly at maturity.

I am happy to say that both of the rescued women are now living, one in California, and the other at Lake Okoboji, in Iowa, on the exact spot where all her family were killed, and whence she was carried away. About six months after the rescue of these captives, I succeeded in killing the eldest son of Ink-pa-du-ta with a squad of regulars and some young fellows of my party; and that is all the punishment that was ever visited upon them. The State of Iowa has erected a stately monument of granite on the spot, to commemorate the massacre and rescue, which was dedicated with appropriate ceremonies on the thirty-eighth anniversary of the event.

Five years after this episode the Sioux of the Mississippi, the tribes I had previously had in charge, broke into open rebellion, and in one day and a half slaughtered quite one thousand of our people. Of course, we sprang to arms and resisted their advance. The principal battles fought were the siege of Fort Ridgely, which was on their reservation, and which lasted off and on for some nine days, and was vigorously and successfully contested by a small garrison of citizens and volunteer soldiers; and the battles of New Ulm, a German town situated down the Minnesota river about eighteen miles below the

fort. Here there were fought two battles, the last against the whole force of the tribe. In these last battles I had the honor to command the whites, and in both engagements we were successful. Had we not won these fights, the fifteen hundred women and children that were in the town, together with every man of my command, would have been butchered. So you see we had something of a stake to fight for.

In the last and most formidable of these attacks on New Ulm my old friend, Little Crow, commanded the Sioux. We did not need any interpreter on this occasion to make known our wants. His scalp now hangs in the museum of the Minnesota Historical Society.

The defeat of the Indians in these conflicts checked their advance and put them on the retreat. They were vigorously followed up by General Sibley with quite an army, and, after several very sharp encounters, were driven across the Missouri river. Over three hundred of them were captured and convicted of murder by a drum-head court martial, and thirty-eight of them were hanged on one gallows.

The State of Minnesota has recognized the battles of Fort Ridgely and New Ulm by very handsome monuments erected on the battle-fields.

The Indian has stood in the pathway of advancing civilization from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He has been compelled to retire before his more enlightened brother; but, could he read the record of his stubborn resistance, he would have the satisfaction of knowing that, for every one of his race that has fallen, not less than a score of his conquerors have bitten the dust. It is often objected that he does not make an open fight, that he is treacherous and cowardly. I have always said in answer to these charges that he is the only fighter who fully understands the philosophy of war, which is to kill your enemy and not get killed yourself. The whole business, at its best, is savagery; but the question whether an abolition of it by the arbitration of international disputes will exalt the race is on a par with the question whether the abolition of duelling in the German army will elevate the tone of that organization. There is room for two opinions.

REQUIREMENTS FOR STATEHOOD.

State-building in the west has about reached its limit. All the land has been occupied except Alaska, Arizona, New Mexico, and a few remnants. Have we been wise in the past in the prosecution of our work? I contend that there exist moral laws which are as unyielding as the laws of nature; that if a political party violates an economic or prudential law for purposes of temporary expediency or party gain, the consequences of such violation are just as sure to come back to plague that party as if a man should violate the law of gravitation by jumping from the top of a Chicago sky-scraper with the hope of going up instead of coming down. There have been occasions in our history when it was thought necessary to reinforce a party in the United States Senate for some special purpose; and states have been admitted into the Union which were no more fit for such a dignified position than a Texas steer is to be a guest in a polite drawing-room. The consequence is that the nation is now afflicted with a number of mining camps and cattle ranches called States, represented by senators whose highest ambition seems to be the advocacy of some private interest, and whose entire constituency number about as many people as are found in one ward in the city of St. Paul.

Think of Nevada, with its forty thousand inhabitants, holding down the balance in the United States Senate with New York and its four or five million people. Sit in the gallery of the senate and make a comparison between its present members and those who composed it thirty or forty years ago, and the absurdity and danger of admitting many of these states into the Union forces itself upon the most casual observer. A state of the American Union ought to be a body politic of which anyone should be proud to be a citizen; and yet we find a good many of them in which a self-respecting man would hesitate to cast his lot, or a prudent man to invest a dollar. This unfortunate condition of things is largely the result of party delinquencies, personal ambitions, and the placing of material gain above higher statesmanship. You cannot make a stream rise above its source. The pioneer, with all his courage, endurance and heroic characteristics, is not, as a general thing,

composed of very fine intellectual fiber, nor made of the best material out of which to mould safe political guides. In my opinion, the future of our country would have presented a much more promising outlook had no western state been allowed admission until it had acquired at least half a million inhabitants. It would then have been much more difficult for unfit men to secure responsible positions, and a much better political and social tone would have obtained. There is no objection to absolute home rule in the territories; but when they expand into states, their rule involves the well-being of the nation.

SUFFRAGE.

We have been much too generous in the West with the bestowal of the suffrage. In the infancy of our state life our great desire was to secure population. We wanted men to fill our waste places, and we did not care very much who they were. In this, our anxiety, we violated every safeguard of our well-being, and held out to the world an invitation to come into the family on the easiest possible terms. There was a sort of auction of citizenship, and it went to the lowest bidder. One year's residence in the United States, a few months in the state, a declaration of intention, and anybody could enjoy all the advantages of American citizenship. In Minnesota, up to the last election, a man could be governor or chief justice of the state, and at the same time be a subject of Great Britain, of the Sultan of Turkey, or of any other foreign power. Such a statement seems impossible, yet it is an alarming truth. An effort was made at the last election to confine the suffrage to full citizens of the United States; this remedy comes very late, but is better late than never. No man should be allowed to participate in the grand function of governing himself and his fellow men until he has proved himself worthy of the privilege. If there is a danger menacing our institutions of free government, it is a too liberal suffrage. This question is beginning to force itself on the consideration of our people. Time alone can prove whether we have the wisdom coupled with the power to rectify our early mistakes. To convey an idea of the extent to which the suffrage has been extended in Minnesota, I need but to say

that the model ballot prepared for the information of the voter at the last election had the directions printed on the back of it in nine languages, one of which was Finnish.

IMMIGRATION.

Universal and unrestricted suffrage, supported by universal and unrestricted immigration, will as surely destroy our institutions as the sparks fly upwards. No country can long stand it, and even America, with its vast powers of digestion and assimilation, must ultimately succumb to it. We pride ourselves upon having created a splendid nation, and no man is more proud of it than I am; but is it not our duty to endeavor to perpetuate to our posterity the fruits of our handiwork? Will our past advance towards greatness and wealth continue uninterruptedly in the future as in the past? Are our political and economic methods on a solid basis? Are there not worms gnawing at the roots of our supposed security that some day may overthrow all we have achieved, threaten the foundations of our liberties, and plunge us into civil war and anarchy? I try to take the roseate view of passing events as far as possible, but we cannot shut our eyes to the serious questions that are daily forcing themselves upon our consideration.

The whole Union is convulsed with a strife between capital and labor, and very few countries could stand the strain without disastrous consequences. Our safety-valve for the evils of too great latitude in the suffrage and immigration has been heretofore our unoccupied territory, which carried off surplus population and left room in our older and more densely settled communities for labor to find remunerative occupation. This safety-valve has not yet been wholly closed, but with the rush of immigration, consequent upon the greater facilities afforded by ocean transportation, it soon will be closed, and all labor will find itself cribbed and cramped as in Europe.

Is there any remedy for these evils? I hope so, but fear that there is none. We started wrong and the evil has grown to such proportions that all avenues seem to be cut off. The privilege of sharing in the government of this nation, which should be regarded as an inestimable boon, and only to be enjoyed by those who have proved themselves to be worthy of

it, is now largely in the possession of people who are alien to our traditions, alien to our language, and hostile to all forms of government. If this power cannot be recalled, may it not be checked before it is too late?

I have always been inclined towards the doctrine of free trade, but the subject of free trade and protection has heretofore been confined to the products of labor and not to labor itself. We have protected cotton, sugar, wool, iron, and thousands of other things, much to the impoverishment of our agricultural interests, and of the multitude of our consumers in all classes and conditions; but no one has ever yet presented any plan for the protection of labor. On the contrary, until the Chinese exclusion laws were enacted, the effort of all our people has been to throw our doors wide open to increasing competition in all branches and grades of labor, and consequently to lessen its value and oppress the laborer. It has been a common thing to import labor by the cargo to supplant our American operatives, and with the one result of driving them to the wall, to poverty and want, or out of their natural channels of occupation. So unbearable did this condition of things become in our Pacific states that the Congress of the nation decreed that Chinese immigration should stop; and everybody responded, Amen,—none more gladly than the laboring man.

Now, when you come to reflect on the subject, the Chinaman was only offensive because he undermined our American labor. That was his only fault. He did not carry any red flags, nor clamor for the blood of everybody who had been industrious enough in life to accumulate some property. He did not want to subvert the government and substitute the rule of the proletariat. Not at all. He was a patient, submissive, hard worker, and an orderly man; but his competition was ruinous, and he was wisely told that for this sin alone we did not want him and would not have him. Now, where is the justice or sense of expelling the Chinaman, if the gates of the nation are to be thrown wide open to all the rest of the world, and if they are to be invited to swarm into our labor field, and not only to drive our laborers to poverty and starvation, but to flaunt their bloody emblems in the faces of our people, and to threaten destruction and chaos?

If it was a good thing to exclude the Chinamen because our labor could not stand their competition, then it must be an equally good thing to cut off other streams of competition that bring with them not only distress to our laborers, but danger to our institutions. I am aware that some restrictive laws have been passed by Congress on the subject of immigration, but am convinced that they are all utterly impotent to check the growing evil. We have only to read the report of the Commissioner General of Immigration for the last fiscal year, which shows that 340,468 were admitted to our shores during the year, and that out of this number 78,130 could neither read nor write in any language. Think of nearly 23 per cent. of the enormous supply for this year being stolidly, densely ignorant, and that within perhaps five or six years they will all be engaged in shaping our laws and institutions.

Our working men are well organized for their own protection, and the last election has proven that they understand pretty well where their own interests lie. They know that members of Congress who want re-election are ready to respond to their slightest demands. Why do they not insist that they shall not continue to be overwhelmed by this ever increasing flood of cheap competition? There is no more difficulty in cutting it off than there was in the case of the Chinese. All it wants is that the people most interested shall say the word, and the result will be accomplished. When the country was vacillating over the best means of resuming specie payments after the late civil war, Horace Greeley cut the matter short by proclaiming to the struggling financiers and philosophers, "The way to resume is to resume;" and resumption became an accomplished fact without further bother or nonsense. Let the laboring people of America say, "Stop all immigration for a period of ten or twenty years," and the thing will be done without discussion or cavil, and the nation will be relieved of one of the most dangerous and threatening questions that has afflicted it since the war, that of unemployed labor.

There is no danger of interfering with the growth of the country while we have 70,000,000 of people to breed from. There is such a thing as a too rapid growth, and that is the very prob-

lem that we are now confronted with. Do not understand me to refer to emigration from the east to the west in our own country, or from the urban to the rural districts. These movements deserve encouragement. If we could transplant the surplus population of the congested sections of the east to the more sparsely settled west, and from the cities to the country, it would prove a great blessing to the laboring people and to the country at large; but we all know the difficulty attending such distribution of population; all that can be done in that direction is by an intelligent presentation of the advantages which the emigrant will gain by such movement, leaving the matter to work out its own solution.

But we hear the advocates of unrestricted immigration, who are either employers of labor, or blatant patriots who love to talk about our country as an asylum for the oppressed of all nations, drawing comparisons between America and Europe, as to the number of people that can be sustained to the square mile. They will prove that Europe sustains hundreds, where we have only fives and tens; forgetting that the density of population in Europe is the cause of its pauperized labor and the desire of its people to flee from its depressing influences, while the sparsity of settlement in America is the wealth and hope of the laborer.

They omit from their estimates, also, the fact that there is in the west a vast area of unproductive lands, which are utterly incapable of sustaining any considerable population by agriculture. This immense region, which is fatally deficient in rainfall, lies within the following boundaries: on the north, the forty-ninth parallel; on the east, the one hundredth meridian; on the south, the northern boundary of Mexico; and on the west, the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada mountains. It comprises an extent of country measured by seventeen degrees of latitude, and by nineteen degrees of longitude; and it contains about a million square miles of territory. In 1875, General W. B. Hazen, of the United States Army, in a published brochure, characterized this region as "Our Barren Lands," and asserted its absolute unfitness for successful agriculture. His statement was challenged by interested parties, and he sus-

tained its truthfulness by the most ample proofs, presenting all the facts then known, the correctness of which time and experience have fully verified. Hundreds of thousands of emigrants have since been wrecked in hopes and fortune by venturing within its inhospitable limits; and millions of capital have been lost in investments in its arid lands, until its unsuitability for agriculture has been so thoroughly demonstrated that the eastern boundary which I have mentioned has acquired among all investors the name of "the dead line," and now not a dollar can be induced to cross it. It is only habitable for cattle-herders and miners, and can never support more than a very sparse population.

Shall we yield our advantages, or hold fast to the generous gifts which nature has bestowed upon our country as a heritage of prosperity for our coming generations? I believe it was sound statesmanship to invite immigration when our country needed it, and it was a boon both to those who were here and those who joined them. And I also regard it as better statesmanship to put a stop to it when we find that a superabundance of it is inflicting upon our laboring people all the evils of the withering and killing competition that they fled from. The subject is of vastly more importance than either currency or tariff.

We have taken a look at the conditions under which our states have been built up in the west, and also at some of the defects in their architecture, with a suggestion of the remedy to insure their perpetuation; and, as "an honest confession is good for the soul," I freely admit that I have had my full share in producing the evils of which I complain. With my present clearer light, however, I promise faithfully never to do so again, and to devote the balance of my life to making reparation for my past delinquencies, pleading youth in mitigation of my errors.



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